

Making the Global City, Making Inequality: The Political Economy and Cultural Politics of Chicago School Policy

Pauline Lipman
DePaul University

This article examines current Chicago school reform in the context of economic restructuring, the drive to become a “global city,” and the cultural politics of race. The discussion focuses on high stakes testing and accountability policies and on new, special programs and schools. My analysis is based on data from four qualitative case studies of Chicago elementary schools, school system data on the nature and geographic distribution of differentiated programs and schools, and examination of labor force trends and economic development policies. Contrary to the discourse of equity that frames Chicago school reform, I argue that the current policies exacerbate existing race and class inequalities and create new ones. The policies promote unequal educational opportunities and experiences and produce stratified identities with significant implications in Chicago’s new, highly stratified work force. As a whole, Chicago’s reforms support the inherent inequalities of global city development, gentrification, and the displacement of working-class and low-income communities, especially communities of color. I argue that education policies are part of a cultural politics of race aimed at the control and regulation of African-American and Latino youth and their communities. The paper concludes with proposals toward the democratic reconstruction of urban education policy.

KEYWORDS: *globalization, inequality, political economy, race and ethnicity, school reform.*

Chicago’s high-stakes testing, “no social promotion” policy, and system of centralized accountability have become a national model for urban education reform. Despite publicity about rising test scores and claims of a “vastly improving system,” there is little critical examination of the genesis of these policies, of whose interests they serve, of their social implications, or of their

PAULINE LIPMAN is an Associate Professor of Social and Cultural Foundations in Education at DePaul University, 2320 N. Kenmore, Chicago, IL 60614. Her research focuses on race and class in urban education, the social-cultural context of school reform, and critical policy analysis.

meanings for teachers, communities, and most of all, the nearly one-half million students in the Chicago Public Schools, 90 percent of whom are students of color and 84 percent of whom are classified as low income. This article contributes to a socially and culturally situated discussion of relationships between school-level meanings and districtwide effects of policy, on the one hand, and political-economic and cultural contexts, on the other.

I discuss Chicago school policies in the context of the restructuring of Chicago's economy and the drive by corporate, financial, and political elites to make Chicago a "global city" (Sassen, 1994). My central argument is that, contrary to the discourse of equity that frames Chicago's "reforms," current policies actually exacerbate existing inequalities and create new dynamics of inequality with important implications for students and for the future of the city as a whole. I contend that the policies sharpen existing differences in opportunities to learn and that they produce segmented student identities with significant ramifications in Chicago's restructured economy and work force. Although there are new educational opportunities for a small number of students, the vast majority, primarily students of color, attend schools organized around basic literacies that are likely to prepare them primarily for low-wage jobs. My data also suggest that Chicago Public School policies undermine culturally relevant teaching¹ and pedagogies that promote critical approaches to knowledge. I also contend that the policies and the cultural politics of race that surround them contribute to the control and regulation of African-American and Latino youth and have important consequences for the city's spatial reorganization and displacement of working-class communities, especially communities of color.

As capitalism is restructured globally, some cities are driven to the margins of the global economy while others fight for position as global cities. Under conditions of simultaneous global economic dispersal and integration, global cities are marketplaces of global finance, major sites for producing innovations central to the informational economy, and places where global systems of production are organized and managed (Sassen, 1994). New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago have been described as global cities (Abu-Lughod, 1999). These urban centers have become the concentrated expression of the contradictions of wealth and poverty that typify globalization (Sassen, 1994). These contradictions are paralleled by new forms of social segregation and dislocation and glaring disparities in the use of, and access to, urban space. New inequalities among and within cities clearly have implications for urban schools. In Chicago, the drive to become a "world class city," with its increasing race and class polarization, forms the social landscape on which the trends and tensions of educational policy are played out. The intersection of educational policy and this broader social-economic dynamic is at the heart of my analysis.

The 1988 and 1995 Chicago School "Reforms"

In 1995, the Illinois State Legislature passed a Chicago school reform law that gave the city's mayor responsibility for the Chicago Public Schools (CPS). Chicago's Mayor Daley appointed his Chief of Staff, Gery Chico, to head the

CPS Board of Trustees (which replaced the Board of Education) and his Budget Director, Paul Vallas, as CEO of schools. (When test scores leveled off in spring 2001, Vallas and Chico resigned and Daley appointed new leadership.) The Vallas–Chico administration installed a highly regulatory regime centered on high-stakes tests, standards, and remediation. Schools that fail to perform at minimum levels on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) in the elementary grades and the Test of Academic Proficiency (TAP) in high school are put on a warning list or on probation; or their leadership and staff can be reconstituted by the central office. (The ITBS is in addition to the Illinois State Achievement Test, ISAT.) Low test scores also carry severe consequences for students, including retention at benchmark grades 3, 6, and 8 and mandatory summer school. Eighth-graders aged fifteen years or older who fail the test in summer school are assigned to remedial transition high schools. Bilingual education is also limited to three years for most students, after which they are tested in English with the same consequences as monolingual English students. Accountability measures are backed up by new remedial programs, including after-school programs, transition classes with reduced student–teacher ratios, summer school, and transition high schools. Starting in 1995, the board also initiated new magnet college-preparatory high schools, advanced academic programs, and vocational academies. In 1997, it established academic standards and curriculum frameworks to standardize the knowledge and skills to be taught in each grade.²

Under the current regime, teachers' work is increasingly governed by the technical rationality of teaching specific skills, employing centrally mandated curricula, and, in some low-scoring schools, using scripted direct instruction. Beginning in fall 1999, the board issued a semiscripted standard curriculum for grades K–12 based on its mandated summer school curriculum. Although it was optional, Vallas predicted that in five years 80 percent of teachers would be using it. In addition, a new high school test for core academic subjects, the Chicago Academic Standards Exam, is being phased in to count as 25 percent of students' final grade, thereby dictating a significant portion of what is taught in high school core subjects.

The 1995 policies are layered over the 1988 Chicago School Reform Act, which established unprecedented democratic participation in school governance through local school councils (LSCs). The majority of those serving on the LSCs are parents and community residents. LSCs have the power to hire and fire principals, approve annual local school improvement plans, and allocate Chapter 1 funds.³ Although there was substantial variability in the effectiveness of LSCs, their level of participation, and the degree to which they sparked innovation (Bryk, Sebring, Kerbow, Rollow, & Easton, 1998; Shipp, 1997), at least in its first few years, the 1988 reform energized broad grassroots participation in school reform (Katz, Fine, & Simon, 1997; *Catalyst*, 1990, February; 1991, June). However, by 1995, the mayor and business leaders were impatient with the pace of school improvement and with ongoing contention with the unions. They colluded with the Republican state legislature to recentralize the system under the mayor's control.⁴

The “democratic localism” (Bryk et al., 1998) of the LSCs continues to function in tandem with recentralization, albeit in an increasingly weakened form.⁵ The nature of this relationship of democratic local control and centralized accountability is varied and complex. The pages of the *Catalyst*, a monthly magazine that has chronicled Chicago school reform since 1990, record wide variation in the vitality of LSCs since 1995. The influence of centralized policies on schools also varies. However, reports in the *Catalyst* and my own school-level data indicate that, in general, grassroots participation and local power (embodied in LSCs) has been substantially compromised by the overriding impact of CPS’s recentralization and accountability reform (see Lipman, forthcoming, 2000).⁶

Critical Policy Analysis

My approach departs from much that has been written about recent Chicago school reforms. The grassroots, democratic–popular thrust of the 1988 reform and its impact on school improvement has been widely described and debated (e.g., Allensworth & Easton, 2001; Bryk, Sebring, et al., 1998; Hess, 1991; Katz, Fine, & Simon, 1997; Kyle & Kantowicz, 1992; Shipps, 1997). There has also been some analysis of the racial politics of the 1988 reform and its implications for the system’s African-American leaders (Lewis & Nakagawa, 1995). And there is substantial research on outcomes of the policies initiated since 1995 (e.g., Bryk, Thum, Easton, & Luppescu, 1998; Newmann, Lopez, & Bryk, 1998; Roderick, Bryk, Jacob, Easton, & Allensworth, 1999; Roderick, Nagaoka, Bacon, & Easton, 2000; Smith, Smith, & Bryk, 1998). However, despite wide interest in Chicago school reform and its national significance, there is little analysis of its relationship to the political economy or cultural politics of the city, especially the cultural politics of race. And there is little attention to what Chicago schools are educating students for.

To address these issues, I borrow Grace’s (1984) notion of “critical policy scholarship”—policy analysis that is theoretically and socioculturally situated and generative of social action. I link an empirical analysis of Chicago’s educational policies with a “political analysis of their genesis and social meaning” (Apple, 1998). I am interested in the observable consequences of policy and its ideological force—the ways in which policy texts and discourses are a form of symbolic politics (Gusfield, 1986) or political and cultural performance (Smith, Heinecke, & Noble, 2000), not only regulating educational content and practice but defining which knowledge, values, and behavior are considered legitimate. Through their definition of public problems and the solutions they pose, policies organize consciousness around shared understandings of educational issues and of specific social groups, e.g., African-American students and educational failure. Thus educational policies are part of a dominant system of social relations, framing what can be thought or said (Ozga, 2000).

At the same time, educators, students, and families remake policy at the local level as they shape educational experiences and negotiate meanings in

schools within the constraints imposed by centralized policies (see Ball, 1994; Grace, 1994; Ozga, 2000). Among schools there is also variety in educational philosophies and practices, and the philosophies of central office programs and staff may run counter to a district's dominant agenda. Residual and emerging perspectives compete with CPS's dominant culture of accountability and control. In short, both agency and constraint exist at all levels of the system, and policy-as-practice is the result of conflicts and contention in particular contexts as teachers and administrators "rewrite" policies through their own actions within the restrictions imposed on them. Moreover, there is contention within the state over policy formation—within the city's political regime, the State Board of Education, and the CPS administration. Although I attempt to describe some of this complexity, a full discussion is largely beyond the scope of this article. (See Lipman, forthcoming; 2001, April, for a discussion of these issues.) My focus here is on the systemic dimensions of the dominant discourse within an admittedly multifaceted picture and multiple discourses.

I assess CPS policies from the standpoint of equity and social justice. Here I claim an expanded definition of equity (Tate, 1997) that emphasizes equality of outcomes. To achieve equity, not only must students have equal opportunities and rights, but special efforts must be made to overcome past injustice and the historically sedimented advantages of race, gender, and class. Policies and programs perpetuate social inequality and injustice when they prepare students of specific racial/ethnic, class, or gender groups for unequal life choices, when they merely extend advantages to a larger percentage of marginalized students, or when marginalized students have to compete with each other for scarce advantages, e.g., magnet schools and other highly competitive advanced academic programs.

Methodology and Research Sites

Ozga argues that to address the complexity of policy analysis, it is important to "bring together structural, macro-level analyses of social systems and education policies with micro-level investigation, especially that which takes account of people's perception and experience" (in Ball, 1994, p. 14). To accomplish this, I weave together several types and levels of data.

To capture meanings of CPS policies for teachers, school administrators, and students, I conducted qualitative studies of four Chicago public elementary schools, which I call Grover, Westlawn, Brewer, and Farley. (Lack of specificity about schools and informants is necessary to protect anonymity.) Both Grover and Westlawn's student bodies are more than 90 percent low-income and more than 95 percent African American. Although Grover was placed on probation in 1996, in 2000 fewer than 15 percent of its students scored at or above national norms in reading on the ITBS and fewer than 25 percent were at or above national norms in math. In contrast, Westlawn's test scores have risen substantially each year since 1997, when it was put on a warning list. In 2000 its percentage of students at or above national norms in reading

and math hovered around 50 percent. More than 90 percent of Brewer's students are Mexican or Mexican-American and about 90 percent are low income. The school has a large bilingual program, and more than 50 percent of the students score at or above national norms on the ITBS. Farley has a multiracial, multiclass student population; fewer than 50 percent are low-income; more than 50 percent are African American; the remainder are White, Asian, and Latino. Farley's ITBS scores are high for CPS, with 70 to 80 percent at or above national norms.

I studied Grover and Westlawn from September 1997 through January 2001. My colleagues⁷ and I conducted 55 semistructured, audiotaped, and transcribed teacher interviews and 33 formal and informal administrator interviews over four years with a total of 33 teachers and 7 administrators.⁸ We interviewed teachers across grade levels but focused on benchmark grades 3, 6, and 8—the grades in which promotion is based on test scores. We interviewed 14 parents and representatives of community groups and observed 118 classes, school meetings, and professional development sessions using a structured observation protocol,⁹ which I supplemented with field notes. I studied Brewer with Eric Gutstein from 1995 to 1999 and have continued my contact with teachers and the principal. We were involved with the school in various capacities, including professional development, collaboration in teaching and school improvement, and research. We formally interviewed and engaged in ongoing dialogue with the principal and about a third of the faculty and talked informally with virtually all of the school's teachers, teaching assistants, and staff. Gutstein and a research assistant interviewed 22 students. We participated regularly in faculty meetings and observed or participated in classes at most grade levels. In 1999, I conducted interviews on CPS policies with the principal and four teachers, selected because they taught the benchmark grades and were teachers we had identified as oriented to culturally relevant teaching and social justice (Lipman & Gutstein, 2001). I studied Farley during the 2000–2001 school year. I interviewed 17 teachers representing most grade levels (pre-K–8), though I focused on teachers at benchmark grades. I was a participant observer in 10 teachers' classes, several times in most. At all four schools I attended school meetings and events and spent time in teachers' lounges, lunchrooms, and the school office. I also collected school and district archival data. I coded the data for themes and constructed the analysis from these themes. I shared emerging interpretations with teachers and administrators, and their ideas inform my final discussion. At Brewer we analyzed data collaboratively with some teachers.¹⁰

My interpretation of official CPS policy and policy discourses and of Chicago's economic and political trends is based on interviews with eight CPS administrators selected for their leadership of specific CPS programs, attendance at CPS meeting, and review of a variety of archival sources, including CPS documents and press releases, newspapers, proposals for Chicago's economic development, and business and real estate publications. I also used quantitative data produced by CPS and the Consortium on Chicago School Research. I computed the percentage of CPS students participating in

new programs or schools and mapped the location of those programs and schools on real estate patterns, work force trends, and school and neighborhood demographics. Sociological studies of Chicago's changing economy, work force trends, racial politics, and neighborhoods inform this investigation as well (e.g., Abu-Lughod, 1999; Betancur & Gills, 2000a; Clavel & Kleniewski, 1990; Ferman, 1996; Giloth & Weiwei, 1996; Squires et al., 1987; Weiwei & Nyden, 1991).

My analysis is preliminary, and in some instances, partial. More ethnographic data are needed to explore fully the meanings that students and teachers make of programs and policies. Also, much relevant information about CPS programs is constantly changing or not readily available. I have had to construct this information from CPS documents and personal conversations with school officials.

I begin by summarizing some key features of globalization, with attention to changes in the occupational structure and spatial organization of global cities. Then I discuss Chicago as a "dual city" characterized by increasing inequality and social segregation. I develop this context in some detail as it is essential to an understanding of educational policies. Next, I turn to an examination of school policy, focusing on the leading edge of current reforms: accountability and centralized control, remediation, standards, and new academic programs and schools. I analyze the practical and symbolic thrust of these policies in relation to economic restructuring, the drive to make Chicago a global city, and the reorganization of urban space. I conclude with an argument for a redirection of educational policy.

Globalization, the Informational Economy, and Inequality

At the heart of economic globalization is the technological capacity to generate knowledge and process information at increasing speeds and efficiencies, a highly integrated and flexible system of production of goods and services built on the global reorganization of the labor process and transnational circuits of labor, and the worldwide primacy of finance and speculative capital (Castells, 1989, 1998; Korten, 1995; Sassen, 1994). Under the global regime of capitalist accumulation, these developments magnify existing inequalities and create new ones. These developments also destabilize populations on a national as well as international level and stimulate the spatial reorganization of cities, creating greater social segregation of races, ethnic groups, and social classes (Castells, 1987; Sassen, 1994, 1998). In the United States the shift from manufacturing to a service and informational economy has created a highly segmented and increasingly polarized labor force (Castells, 1987, 1995; Sanjek, 1998; Sassen, 1994) defined by the following trends:

1. A decrease in basic manufacturing and a shift in its labor structure, with an increase in jobs held by professionals and technicians and a decrease in jobs held by operatives.

2. A dramatic increase in service jobs. These are highly segmented by wages and salaries, education, and benefits. There is rapid growth both in high-skilled technical, professional and managerial jobs at the upper end (primarily held by Whites, particularly males) and in low-skilled, low-wage jobs at the lower end (held primarily by women and people of color).
3. The proliferation of contingent labor: multitask, part-time, and temporary work done mainly by women, people of color, and immigrants working two, three, even four jobs.¹¹
4. A rapidly growing informal economy that employs primarily immigrant and women workers. These workers produce specialized consumer goods and services for the affluent (e.g., custom-made clothing and in-home child care) and low-cost goods and services for low-income families (e.g., garage-produced furniture and unlicensed family day care).
5. Little opportunity for work in the formal economy for a sector of potential workers, primarily African-American and Latino youth.

In short, the result of the simultaneous processes of upgrading, downgrading, and exclusion of labor is a work force that is highly stratified by class, race, national origin, and gender (Castells, 1989).

In the new economic context, economic growth is contributing to greater inequality (Sassen, 1994; Wolf, 1995).¹² Despite increases in earnings at the top of the income scale, the bulk of new jobs have lower wages and less social protection than in the recent past.¹³ From 1973 to 1995, real average weekly earnings for production and nonsupervisory workers dropped from \$479.44 to \$395.37 (Castells, 1998, p. 130). There was also increasing polarization of wealth: The richest 1 percent of households increased their marketable wealth by 28.3 percent from 1983 to 1992, while the bottom 40 percent declined by 49.7 percent (Wolf, 1996).

Chicago: A Global City?

Deindustrialization, White flight, fiscal crises of the state, and policies of racial segregation and abandonment over the past twenty-five years have left inner cities and urban schools underfunded and in decay (see Anyon, 1997; Bettis, 1994; Kozol, 1991; Rury & Mirel, 1997). However, economic restructuring and globalization have led to *selective* reinvestment and reinvigoration of urban areas. Castells (1989, 1998) and Sassen (1994, 1998) argue that global cities, in particular, have become “dual cities” characterized by contradictions of disinvestment and reinvestment. They are marked by high growth and downgraded labor and by upscale, gentrified neighborhoods and redeveloped downtowns catering to arts, tourism, and leisure alongside isolated, poor African-American, Latino, and immigrant neighborhoods. These trends have important ramifications for Chicago’s school system.

During his first mayoral campaign in 1989, Richard M. Daley told *Crain's Chicago Business*, "This city is changing. You're not going to bring factories back. . . . I think you have to look at the financial markets—banking, service industry, the development of O'Hare field, tourism, trade. This is going to be an international city" (Phillips-Fein, 1998, p. 28). Daley has continued to promote this agenda set by Chicago's business, financial, and real estate interests. Chicago fits many criteria of a global city, such as concentration of sophisticated producer services, international markets, and corporate headquarters (Abu-Lughod, 1999). In the last ten years, Chicago has become a financial center and home to producer services and headquarters for 18 of the top 500 transnational companies (Betancur & Gills, 2000a). The city has 7 of the top 50 U.S. exporters, and Chicago firms are among the world's top ten in pharmaceuticals, oil, electronics, telecommunications, leisure services, and food processing (Moberg, 1997). Chicago has been called a "first order international financial center" (Reed, quoted in Betancur & Gills, 2000a, p. 27), and the value of the financial transactions of the Chicago Mercantile Exchange far exceed those of any other world city, including New York (Abu-Lughod, 1999). Chicago also dominates the global market in futures and options trading; in 1991 it handled 60 percent of all contracts (Sassen, 1994, p. 91). By 1999, it had also become the nation's fourth-largest high-technology center. Specialized services required by global financial centers (e.g., legal, technological, and consulting services) are expanding. Meanwhile, the Daley administration's development policies have fed a boom in upscale housing, restaurants, and other amenities designed to attract the highly paid technical, professional, and managerial workers essential to a global city economy (Betancur & Gills, 2000a; Longworth & Burns, 1999). Whether Chicago is actually a global city, or global city boosterism is used to justify development policy, as some suggest (Sanjek, 1998),¹⁴ financial elites and city political leaders clearly are promoting a world city agenda.

Although a discussion of opposition to this trend is beyond the scope of this article, it is important to note that the mayoral administration of Harold Washington (1983–1987) promoted more balanced, redistributive economic development policies, including neighborhood job growth, efforts to stop plant closings, balanced growth of the downtown and of working-class neighborhoods, and greater public participation in decision making. After Washington's sudden death in 1987, this emergent agenda was derailed along with the collapse of his political coalition of African Americans, Latinos, progressive Whites, and energized grassroots organizations. (See Betancur & Gills, 2000b; Clavel & Kleniewski, 1990; Ferman, 1996; Giloth & Meir, 1989; Squires et al., 1987.)

Chicago: A Dual City

Chicago also vividly exemplifies the deepening inequalities and destabilizing conditions that accompany the shift from manufacturing to information and service work. From 1967 to 1990, Chicago's manufacturing jobs shrank

from 546,500 (nearly 41% of all local jobs) to 216,190 (18% of all local jobs), while nonmanufacturing jobs increased from 797,867 (59%) in 1967, to 983,580 (82%) in 1990 (Betancur & Gills, 2000a, p. 27). Using data from the Midwest Center for Labor Research, the *Chicago Tribune* reported in 1999 that the city had replaced manufacturing jobs paying the equivalent of \$37,000 a year with service jobs paying \$26,000 (Longworth & Burns, 1999). In Chicago, 23 percent of manufacturing workers are union members, as compared with 13.9 percent of nonmanufacturing workers (Phillips-Fein, 1998, p. 30). Because unionized workers are more likely to have health insurance and to participate in pension plans, the shift to service jobs has compounded workers' losses. Moreover, manufacturers that have stayed in the Chicago area have tended to automate their plants and restructure for just-in-time production with greatly reduced work forces that often require more sophisticated skills but at stagnant or reduced wages (Moberg, 1997). For dislocated manufacturing workers, primarily African Americans and Latinos, the alternatives are often low-wage service jobs. According to data for 1998 from the Illinois Employment Security Agency, 76 percent of the job categories with the most growth in Illinois pay less than a livable wage, calculated at \$33,739 per year for a family of four; and 51 percent of these jobs pay less than half of a livable wage (National Priorities Project, 1998). While some workers are recycled through the new labor positions, others are forced into the informal economy or the ranks of the unemployed.

Chicago's drive to become a global city is increasing racial inequality. The Chicago metropolitan area now outstrips all others in the economic disparity between Whites and African Americans (Abu-Lughod, 1999). Average wages for Blacks for all occupations dropped from 66 percent of the corresponding wages for Whites in 1970 to 56 percent in 1990. Latinos, on average, earned 64 percent of Whites' wages in 1970 and 50 percent in 1990. Moreover, manufacturing jobs declined most for Blacks and Latinos (Betancur & Gills, 2000a, p. 28), who, if they are able to find work at all, are moving from low-end manufacturing to the bottom of the service economy where wages are lowest, benefits often nonexistent, and work temporary and part-time. This downward spiral can be linked to processes of globalization and export of manufacturing. Ranny (1992) estimates that 62 percent of job loss in large manufacturing plants in the Chicago area was due to the movement of operations to other countries.¹⁵

The Geography of Inequality

In 1973, the Commercial Club of Chicago (CCC), an association of the city's top business, financial, philanthropic, and civic leaders, published its *Chicago 21 Plan*. Since then, Chicago has been on a march to transform itself from a city of working-class neighborhoods, manufacturing zones, and a stagnating downtown. Nearly thirty years later, much of the *21 Plan* has become reality, largely through the leadership of two generations of Daleys as Mayor, in alliance with business and financial interests (see Squires et al., 1987). Despite

localized grassroots opposition to development and displacement since the early 1970s, the face of today's Chicago is marked by upscale lofts and shops carved out of converted and abandoned manufacturing space, gentrified neighborhoods, and a central-core convention and tourist center with upscale housing and retail outlets, cultural venues, and parks. The not-so-public face is a city of deindustrialization, displacement of settled working-class and low-income neighborhoods, and socially isolated, deeply impoverished communities (Betancur & Gills, 2000a).¹⁶

The driving force behind this development is a powerful coalition of interlocking business associations and government units that promote urban growth and development. This "growth machine" (Logan & Molotch, 1987) is comprised of the Daley administration, real estate developers, legal and architectural firms, and corporate and banking leaders who control development in the city (see Betancur & Gills, 2000a; Ferman, 1996; Logan & Molotch, 1987; Squires et al., 1987). The growth machine strategy is to build the central business district—Chicago's "Loop"—as a tourist and convention center and to gentrify its outer ring and working-class neighborhoods north, west, and south of the central city along the lake and key public transportation routes. In the Loop and its fringes, luxury loft conversions and new town-home and condo sales in projects of ten units or more increased from 1,006 in 1995 to 2,577 through just the first three quarters of 1998 (Allen & Richards, 1999). The Brookings Institution projects a 32 percent increase in residential use of the downtown during 2000–2010 (Katz & Nguyen, 1998).

In "hot" neighborhoods, housing prices have shot up 25 to 40 percent in the last five years (Schmid, 1998). In 1997, 93 percent of the city's new houses were built in just seven of the city's community areas (Phillips-Fein, 1998). Gentrifying areas are booming at the expense of working-class residents, who because of rising property taxes and rents are priced out of the neighborhoods where they have raised families, shopped, and established relationships. The city is simultaneously diverting taxes from schools, libraries, and other public services to infrastructure for development in select areas, while low-income neighborhoods and housing are allowed to deteriorate (Podmolik, 1998). Low-income African Americans and Latinos, in particular, are being forced out of rapidly gentrifying areas and are increasingly segregated in parts of the city and suburbs with the most depressed economic conditions (Betancur & Gills, 2000a). Like other major international cities, Chicago is a dual city—spatially, socially, and economically.

Producing Educational Inequality

In this section I examine current CPS policies in relation to educational equity. My focus is the most visible aspects of CPS policies: accountability, remediation and standards, and new programs and schools.

It is not surprising that Chicago's system of high-stakes accountability and centralized regulation of students, teachers, and schools resonates with some educators and families. The "good sense" in these policies (Gramsci,

1971) is that they mandate decisive action to “turn around” a system that has profoundly failed to educate all students, especially children of color (Orfield, 1990). At last, schools are being held accountable for doing more than keeping students in school buildings six hours a day. In the absence of a public accounting of the social, economic, and political roots of the failure to educate so many of Chicago’s children, and in the absence of an alternative program, CPS leaders have successfully framed school reform as a choice between their agenda and the “failed policies of the past.” In a system of blatant inequities, the agenda of standards, tests, and accountability is framed in the language of equality and justice. All students and schools are evaluated by “the same test” and “held to the same standards,” and the retention of thousands of students is “ending the injustice of social promotion” (Vallas, 2000, p. 5). Moreover, the CPS agenda resonates with the call for personal responsibility and accountability in other social arenas, such as welfare “reform” and tough new juvenile justice laws.

The current CPS policies have produced some visible results. There have been measurable gains in test scores, although scores flattened out in 2001. The news media and anecdotal evidence suggest that some teachers and administrators who have held very low academic expectations for students or exerted little effort or responsibility have been forced to teach or have been removed. The news media have also reported examples of more systematic classroom instruction in response to standards and centralized oversight. And the district’s semiscripted curriculum and academic standards provide a framework for ineffectual or inexperienced teachers. As one veteran educator said, “At least now they’re teaching *something*.” However, the implications of these policies for teaching and learning require a closer look.

Accountability and Centralized Control

During three years of research at Westlawn and Grover, administrators and teachers consistently reported that “improving test scores” was their school’s main goal and that “standardized tests” were the main influence on their school. Although some teachers believed that strong test scores would be a by-product of good teaching, at both schools teaching geared specifically to the ITBS was a part of every classroom to some degree. It dominated some classes and was definitely a schoolwide focus from January through April. (See McNeil, 2000, for similar findings in Texas.) At Westlawn, the principal has required teachers to put aside classroom texts for 12–15 weeks and to work almost exclusively on test preparation, including the use of ITBS and ISAT test preparation booklets as a regular part of the curriculum. In 1998–1999, when Westlawn was put on a warning list after its scores dropped, the whole school spent the year focusing on test practice, test-oriented lessons, and grade-level item analysis of the ITBS. That year, teachers chose to use funds from an arts program to buy test preparation books (see Lipman, 2000).

Although almost all teachers at Farley and some at Brewer resisted a narrow focus on the ITBS and the ISAT, and the principals quite openly opposed the district's preoccupation with standardized tests. At all four schools, teachers of benchmark Grades 3, 6, and 8, in particular, felt pressured to align their teaching with the tests. This pressure remains a source of great anxiety for the Farley third-grade teachers, who feel compelled to tack between a focus on the tests and their customary rich literacy curriculum. One teacher described the tension as "devastating." At Brewer, Grover, and Westlawn (especially in the benchmark grades), it was common for teachers to draw students' attention to similarities between classroom exercises and standardized test questions, to admonish them to learn in order to "pass the tests," to use specially designed test preparation booklets in lieu of texts or other curricula as a substantial portion of the curriculum, and to use items on the ITBS as a guide to lesson planning. A Westlawn teacher's comment in the spring of 2000 was typical: "We are test driven . . . everything is test driven." In the weeks before the ITBS, there are Iowa Test pep rallies. "Zap the Iowa" posters festoon the halls, and daily announcements exhort students to gear up for the test.

Standardized tests are most central, and accountability most rigorous, in schools with the lowest scores. This is the district's design. Concretely, these are schools with predominantly low-income African-American and Latino student populations. Among the schools I studied, Farley, a high-scoring, multiracial, mixed-class school, was much less constrained by test preparation than either Grover or Westlawn and to a lesser extent, Brewer. Farley's classrooms were more interactive; teachers spent less time on explicit test preparation activities; they encouraged more independent thought, rich and varied writing assignments, and in-depth conversation. In general, there was a more varied, experiential, and intellectually complex curriculum and a stronger culture of literacy than the more test-driven schools. In contrast, since 1998, Brewer teachers have pulled back from a conceptually rich mathematics curriculum to focus more directly on test preparation (Eric Gutstein, personal communication, April 15, 2001). Some Westlawn teachers developed richer literacy instruction over the course of my study, but this development seemed to grow out of their own professional development experiences (see Lipman, forthcoming). In short, instead of inducing the weaker schools to develop the curricular and pedagogical strengths evident at Farley, accountability policies at the schools that I studied promoted or reinforced a narrow focus on specific skills and on test-taking techniques.

Clearly, some teachers oppose this orientation. A fourth-grade Grover teacher described her unwillingness to give up her "main instructional goal": for her students to become "good thinkers" and people who "love to read." This stance was the norm at Farley, and reflective of a handful of teachers at the other three schools. Some did the kind of "double entry teaching" that McNeil (2000) describes in Texas: test-preparation alongside the "real" curriculum. Yet there was palpable pressure on everyone to raise test scores, and thoughtful teachers wrestled with the contradictions between a

narrow focus on test preparation and broader educational goals, including cultural relevance, critical approaches to knowledge, and meaningful intellectual work. (See Lipman, 2001; Lipman & Gutstein, 2001, for further discussion.) As one Brewer teacher put it, "I think that we are having a rough time, that sometimes we may lean a little bit more towards CPS policies and other times we lean a little bit more to 'screw CPS' and focus on critical thinking skills." Despite resistance, the lowest-scoring schools, Grover and Westlawn, were most dominated by standardized tests. My data suggest that, to the extent that the new policies prompt schools such as these to practice education as test preparation and basic skills (as opposed to an intensive effort to build capacity for more thoughtful, intellectually challenging pedagogies), they widen educational inequalities by institutionalizing a narrowed curriculum in low-scoring schools. (See McNeil, 2000, for similar findings.) It is germane that Newmann, Bryk, and Nagaoka (2001) concluded that CPS students in classrooms that organized instruction around "authentic intellectual work"¹⁷ as opposed to basic skills produced more intellectually complex work (and greater gains on the ITBS).

Although the pressure to raise test scores has pushed some of the weakest teachers to focus more on instruction (frequently by following the district-scripted curriculum), there is some evidence that those pressures are also driving out some of the most respected and committed teachers, including teachers committed to critical and culturally relevant education. When the district put Grover on probation, it replaced an ineffectual veteran administrator with a new principal who, over a period of three years, removed at least ten teachers whom she considered incompetent. However, most of them were replaced by full-time substitute teachers or teacher-interns. At the same time, from 1998 to 2001, the school lost five young, energetic, and knowledgeable teachers (including one winner of the prestigious Golden Apple Award for superior teaching) and a highly respected veteran who was identified as "a school leader" by every teacher I interviewed at Grover. Two who left were known for their deep commitment to the Grover families and community. Several taught with an explicit orientation to developing sociopolitical consciousness and connecting curriculum with their students' experiences. At Brewer, an eighth-grade teacher who taught her students to examine U.S. history critically and assigned intellectually sophisticated projects quit at the end of the year after she felt compelled to spend a quarter using ITBS test preparation materials. Some of these teachers left CPS; three left teaching altogether; others transferred to schools with less accountability pressure. All were disheartened by a narrowed curriculum, the emphasis on high-stakes tests, and "de-skilling" of teachers. A departing Grover teacher's comments were characteristic: "The children are being knocked down to a test score, and the teachers, with their variety of skills and talents, are just being wasted because they are just so zoned into this test." All of the teachers I interviewed at Farley said that if the school became dominated by standardized tests (as in other schools), they would leave CPS or leave teaching altogether. This is sig-

nificant because strong, socially conscious teachers such as these are a potential nucleus of substantive school change.

An even more troubling issue is the widespread knowledge that the central office encourages a form of educational triage—focusing extra instruction on students with the potential to raise a school's scores above the 50th percentile.¹⁸ Teachers and administrators at Grover, Westlawn, and Brewer attended workshops at the district's central office, where they were told to pay less attention to students well above the 50th percentile and to those with no hope of reaching it. As one teacher put it in May 2000, "We had . . . the head of our district, our region, come and tell us, 'When you are walking around your classroom and the kids are working, the kids whose shoulders you need to lean over and give a little extra help are the kids who have stanine four and five.' " This practice, in force at Grover and Westlawn and at other schools across the city, runs counter to claims that current policies promote equity.

Based on their performance on standardized tests, tens of thousands of students have been sent to summer school, retained in grade for as long as three years, precluded from eighth-grade graduation, and assigned to transition high schools. These consequences have fallen heavily on African-American and Latino students. For example, in 1997, 4 percent of Whites, 18 percent of African Americans, and 11 percent of Latinos were retained (Designs, 1999). In 2000, Parents United for Responsible Education won a civil rights complaint against CPS for adverse discriminatory impact of the retention policy on African-American and Latino students. In 1998, the district ratio of African Americans to Whites was 5:1, and the ratio of Latinos to Whites was 3:1. However, in transition high schools for overage eighth-graders who failed the ITBS, the ratio of African Americans to Whites was 27:1, and the ratio of Latinos to Whites was 10:1 (PURE, 1999). Interview data from Brewer's eighth-grade class in 1998 also suggest that the retention policy is both capricious and potentially damaging for students affected (Lipman & Gutstein, 2001). Capable students with strong grades and attendance—including top students who had won prestigious awards—failed the eighth-grade ITBS, and some lost placements in competitive college prep high schools.¹⁹ Others dropped out after failing summer school or quit rather than cross gang lines to attend the transition high school. Moreover, while citywide test scores have increased for nonretained students, retained students' scores have not improved (Roderick et al., 1999). Students retained in 1997 are doing no better than the previously "socially promoted" students, and in many cases are doing worse; nearly one third of retained eighth graders in 1997 dropped out by fall 1999 (Roderick et al., 2000).

In short, a closer look at accountability as it is lived in schools suggests a more complex and troubling picture than that projected by CPS leaders. In the schools that I discuss here, accountability policies steer teaching toward test preparation, especially in low-scoring schools, and often undermine and demoralize committed, socially conscious, culturally relevant educators. Indeed, my data suggest that improved scores may have more to do with test

preparation than with learning. This inference is supported by findings of the Committee on Appropriate Test Use of the Board of Testing and Assessment, National Research Council: "The NRC Committee concluded that Chicago's regular year and summer school curricula were so closely geared to the ITBS that it was impossible to distinguish real subject mastery from mastery of skills and knowledge useful for passing this particular test" (Hauser, 1999, p. 1). This picture challenges the claim that the new get-tough agenda promotes educational equity, and it brings into question the contention that accountability improves learning.

Ideological Force of Accountability

Accountability policies not only regulate educational practice but also are a form of symbolic politics (Gusfield, 1986). They shape the public definition of education, explain educational failure, and organize consciousness around shared understandings of what constitutes legitimate classroom knowledge, educational practice, and valorized social identities. At Brewer, as high-stakes testing has elevated the knowledge and skills emphasized by the ITBS and the ISAT, it has also devalued curricula and pedagogies rooted in the language, culture, lived experiences, and identities of Mexican and Mexican-American students (Lipman & Gutstein, 2001). New requirements for testing bilingual students in English and the district's new bilingual education standards also symbolically privilege English language acquisition over bilingualism and biculturalism, devaluing Spanish, the first language of virtually all of the students or their families in the school. Furthermore, Brewer teachers maintained that practice for multiple-choice, one-right-answer, timed tests undermined their efforts to foster a classroom culture that would encourage students to think for themselves, to question their texts, the teacher, and the authority of official knowledge. (See Lipman & Gutstein, 2001.)

High-stakes policies also relocate responsibility for the failure of public education from the state to individuals (cf. Katz, 2001). In extended interviews, Brewer eighth-graders interpreted test failure and retention as their own fault (Lipman & Gutstein, 2001). In fact, the high-stakes nature of accountability and sanctions against individuals and schools feeds a pervasive CPS culture of individual blame. When students fail, they blame themselves or complain about their teachers; teachers denounce students and parents; central administrators accuse school administrators, teachers, students, and parents. This mentality is instantiated in the CPS parent report card, on which primary teachers grade parents' support for their children's education.

CPS policies also frame schooling in a language that business understands—regulation, accountability, and quality assurance (see Mickelson, Ray, & Smith, 1994). Discursively, the policies define education as a commodity whose production can be quantified, regulated, and designed much like any other product. Symbolically as well as practically, a tough retention policy, high-stakes standardized tests, and discipline and control of

both students and schools certify for Chicago business that CPS graduates will have the specific literacies and dispositions it demands. The retention policy, for example, stamps a seal of approval on students who pass to the next grade, confirming that those who progress meet “industry” standards. Consistent improvement, signified by test scores, is also central to Chicago’s image as a city remaking itself. Mayor Daley claims that recent “improvements” in schools demonstrate that Chicago is the “city that works” and are helping to make Chicago “a world class city.” In a 1998 report, the Commercial Club praised the Mayor’s school reforms and identified education to prepare a skilled work force as one of three top priorities to realize its vision of a multicentered region of “knowledge, expertise, and economic opportunity” (Johnson, 1998, p. 3). This partly explains why the stakes are so high for improving test scores and why their release each spring has become a public spectacle.

At the same time, educational disparities produced by retention and test-driven teaching are likely to deepen race and class inequalities in a world increasingly dominated by those who have access to the production and processing of knowledge. Equally important, the weight of these policies may supplant educational experiences that can help students think critically about the inequalities being produced in their own neighborhoods and in the city as a whole.

Remediation and Standards

CPS leaders contend that schools are providing a comprehensive system of “special help” for failing students (CPS Promotes Retained Students, 1999), including after-school remediation programs, mandatory summer school, and transition (remedial) high schools. My data challenge CPS’s contention that these supports are getting failing students “back on track” and “prepared for the academic work of the next grade” (“CPS Promotes . . .,” 1999). All of the remedial programs concentrate on the ITBS. CPS is explicit about this. The after-school program uses a board-created curriculum that “focuses on boosting standardized test scores for third-, sixth-, and eighth-graders not meeting promotion standards” (Public Schools Receive \$2.25 Million, 1998). Summer school and transition centers are also geared to passing the tests, the capstone experience for both.

Counter to the board’s claim of “state of the art” curricula, a review of the written curriculum in remedial programs suggests that it is test-oriented, narrow, and inconsistent. For example, the mandated, semiscripted 1999 Summer Bridge curriculum for eighth-grade math is a series of rather disconnected lessons generally aligned with the content of the ITBS and an incoherent pedagogy with practice for passing the tests as well as unrelated open-ended work. The teachers’ manual for eighth-grade math had about one error per lesson (Gutstein, 1999). Many summer school teachers are not experts in the content area that they are assigned to teach; in fact, some are learning along with the students (using an inaccurate teacher’s manual). The

1999 eighth-grade Summer Bridge reading program at Brewer had no classroom sets of literature texts, no class discussion of literature, and no writing assignments (Gutstein, 2001). Moreover, students who fail the ITBS in one area (reading or math) are required to attend summer school in both subjects; so many students are sitting through lessons in material they already understand.

Although transition high schools offer the benefits of small size and counseling, the course of study is narrow (math, English, and world studies—no science, art, music, or foreign language) and revolves around intensive ITBS preparation (see Duffrin, 1999a, 1999b). Former Brewer students reported that their transition center curriculum entailed no discussion of literature but rather a constant diet of worksheets geared primarily to standardized tests. The “library” had no books, and gym classes were held in an empty room with no equipment (Gutstein, 2001). A teacher at another transition center described a low-level curriculum: “We try to boil the concepts down to the point where if they just pay attention, they will succeed” (Duffrin, 1999a, p. 6). The impoverishment and redundancy of this basic skills education for students whom the school district has defined as “behind” can hardly be construed as an antidote for the inequities of the system, particularly as African Americans and Latinos are disproportionately assigned to transition centers. Mandating a rudimentary curriculum that few middle-class parents would choose for their own children also symbolically constructs low-income children of color as deficient, a stigma that all of the students interviewed by Gutstein (2001) were bitterly aware of.

Defenders of CPS policies argue that the Chicago Academic Standards (CAS) and Curriculum Frameworks Statements (CFS) ensure that all students are taught the same challenging academic content (Board of Education, 1997). However, although most teachers I interviewed supported the concept of a common curriculum framework for each grade, my school data indicate that, in the day-to-day work of teachers, the meaning of the standards varies widely. Many teachers at Brewer, Grover, and Westlawn simply give lip service to the CAS, plugging them into lesson plans *after* they write them. A few teachers at these schools, and most teachers at Farley, offered detailed critiques of specific standards and their grade-level appropriateness and adopted them selectively. (See Lipman, forthcoming.) Across the board, the standards were imposed with little discussion or professional development and with little attention to the complexity and judgment intrinsic in teaching (see Sheldon & Riddle, 1998).

Setting rigorous standards does not address how they can be met in the context of Chicago’s entrenched inequalities in resources, opportunities to learn, and teachers’ knowledge. Without addressing these inequalities, standards are likely to intensify inequality (Apple, 1996). Teachers I interviewed contended that the CAS superficially elevate academic expectations without the curricular scaffolding or intensive support necessary for students who lack prior knowledge and skills. Without support for students and teachers and without reconceptualizing curricula, pedagogy, and assess-

ment, failure to meet the standards can deepen school failure and students' sense of inadequacy and justify remedial experiences such as summer school and transition high schools. In fact, the emphasis on standards as a path to equity is part of a shift away from the responsibility of the state to provide additional resources to make up for past discrimination. Like high-stakes testing, the standards help legitimate a system that, as a whole, continues to produce inequality. As others have argued (e.g., Apple, 1988, 1996; Bohn & Sleeter, 2000; Tate, 1997), standards also elevate the knowledge and cultural capital of privileged groups and devalue the cultural capital of low-income students, particularly students of color. Teachers at Brewer reported that the standards for bilingual education validate behaviors characterized as "American" and devalue those of non-English speakers (Lipman & Gutstein, 2001).

Patterns of Inequality in New Programs and Schools

Since 1995, CPS has initiated a variety of special programs, schools, and instructional approaches with significant implications in Chicago's current economic context. For purposes of analysis, I have divided programs and schools into "plus" and "minus." (My analysis is based primarily on data from the 1999–2000 school year.) Under the plus category I include those that purport to offer a college preparatory course of study and intellectually challenging curricula. Plus programs that pre-date the 1995 reforms are elementary magnet schools, regional gifted centers, and classical schools; Grade 7–12 Academic Centers for "academically advanced students"; and traditional magnet high schools. New (post-1995) plus programs and schools are expanded International Baccalaureate (IB) programs, College Prep Regional Magnet High Schools, and Math, Science, Technology Academies (MSTAs). Under the minus category I include programs and schools that focus on vocational education, restricted (basic skills) curricula, and intensified regimentation of instruction and control of students. Pre-1995 minus schools are vocational high schools and elementary schools using scripted direct instruction (DI).²⁰ Not to be confused with direct teaching of specific skills and concepts, DI employs teacher-read scripts and mastery of a fixed sequence of skills. Its philosophical underpinning is behaviorism and a deficit model of "economically disadvantaged" students (Becker, 1977). Post-1995 minus programs or schools include DI schools and Education-to-Career Academies (ETCs). Many of the vocational focuses of ETCs involve a core of nonacademic work, such as courses of study for cosmetology, secretarial science, and hospital-ity management. I also include the highly regimented military high schools, although CPS labels them college prep. I have not categorized some programs because, in my observations, they vary widely and may exist in name only (e.g., a "Science Academy" with no special science program); and some, such as magnet clusters, were designated with little or no knowledge on the part of the principals of the schools involved and no programmatic development.²¹ A few schools have plus and minus programs.²²

The school district is divided like a layer cake, from north to south, into six administrative regions (see Figures 1 and 2). The area along Lake Michigan, from the middle of Region 1 to the northern border of Region 5, forms a band of high-income or increasingly gentrified neighborhoods. These wealthy and gentrifying areas along the lake are spreading west into working-class neighborhoods and abandoned industrial corridors.²³ Region 1 has the largest concentration of middle- to upper-income families,²⁴ and gentrification is progressing through the region's mix of immigrant, working-class, and low-income neighborhoods. Region 2 includes the elite Gold Coast along the lake shore and expanding middle- and upper-income areas to the west. Regions 3–6 include the largest concentrations of very low-income African Americans and Latinos in the city. However, the west and south fringes of the Loop (center city), located on the lake in Region 3, are exploding with upper-income residential developments, and there is gentrification along the lake in Region 4. There are large concentrations of very low-income Latinos, African Americans, and Whites in Region 6 as well, but this region also has middle-income concentrations. In sum, wealthy and gentrified or gentrifying areas are located primarily along the lake in Regions 1–4 and are expanding westward. Low-income areas are concentrated in large West Side and South Side tracts of the city, primarily in Regions 3–6.

Figure 1 shows that pre-1995 plus and minus programs and schools were distributed across the city and within each region. The wide distribution of plus programs primarily reflects magnet elementary schools and gifted centers, many of which came out of the Board's early-1980s desegregation plan. Figure 1 also shows several patterns: (a) a concentration of plus programs and schools in a relatively small, upper-income White area along the north lake shore in Regions 1 and 2; (b) a cluster of minus programs and schools in low- and very low-income African-American and Latino areas of Regions 2, 3, and 4; (c) no plus programs or schools in the very large low- and very low-income African-American areas of Region 5. (Region 5 has no Regional Gifted Center, Academic Center, or Classical School.)

The data reveal an interesting pattern when we look at the geographic distribution of *new* plus and minus programs created under the 1995 reforms (Figure 2) and examine which are operational and involve all students in the school and which are not operational or involve only a small percentage of the students in the school. First, the only new plus whole schools are Regional College Prep Magnet High Schools. Four (Regions 1, 2, 3, and 4) are located in, or draw from, upper-income or gentrifying neighborhoods, and three are in prime lake shore areas.²⁵ The Region 6 magnet is in a middle- to low-income African-American community. The Region 5 magnet, in the heart of a very low- to low-income African-American community, is the only one of the six schools that is not in a new or rehabilitated building. There is no regional magnet college prep high school in the extensive low-income African-American and Latino West Side. It is notable that two of the new schools, Northside Prep (Region 1) and Payton (Region 2) are in lavish new buildings. Northside cost \$47 million; Payton, \$33 million (Martinez, 1999).

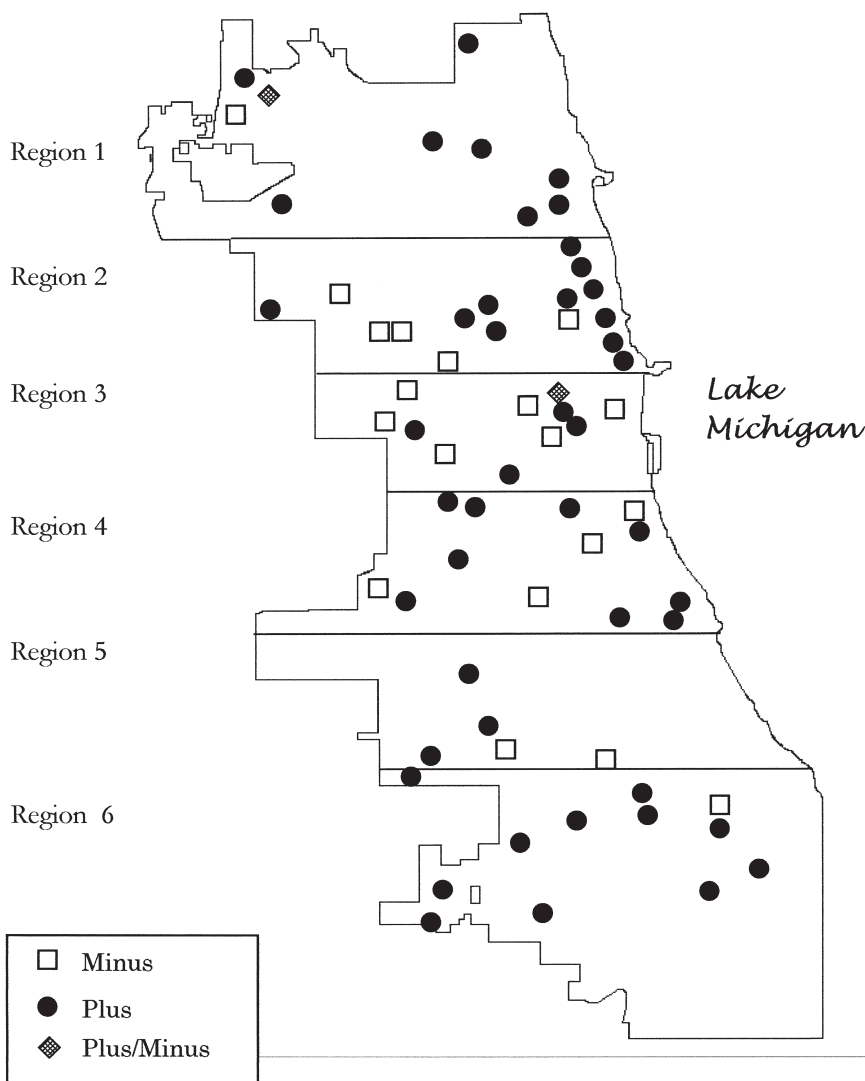


Figure 1. Map of pre-1995 special programs and schools.

Both are in neighborhoods with median home prices eight to ten times those of the neighborhoods of the Region 5 and 6 magnets (Williams, 2000). In fall 2001, Jones (Region 3 magnet) began a \$50 million renovation. In addition to unequal facilities, principals of college preparatory magnets have also reported dramatic north-south disparities in resources and time to design curriculum and recruit teachers. (See *Catalyst*, 2000.) Significantly, pressure from South Side African-American leaders reportedly pushed the board to

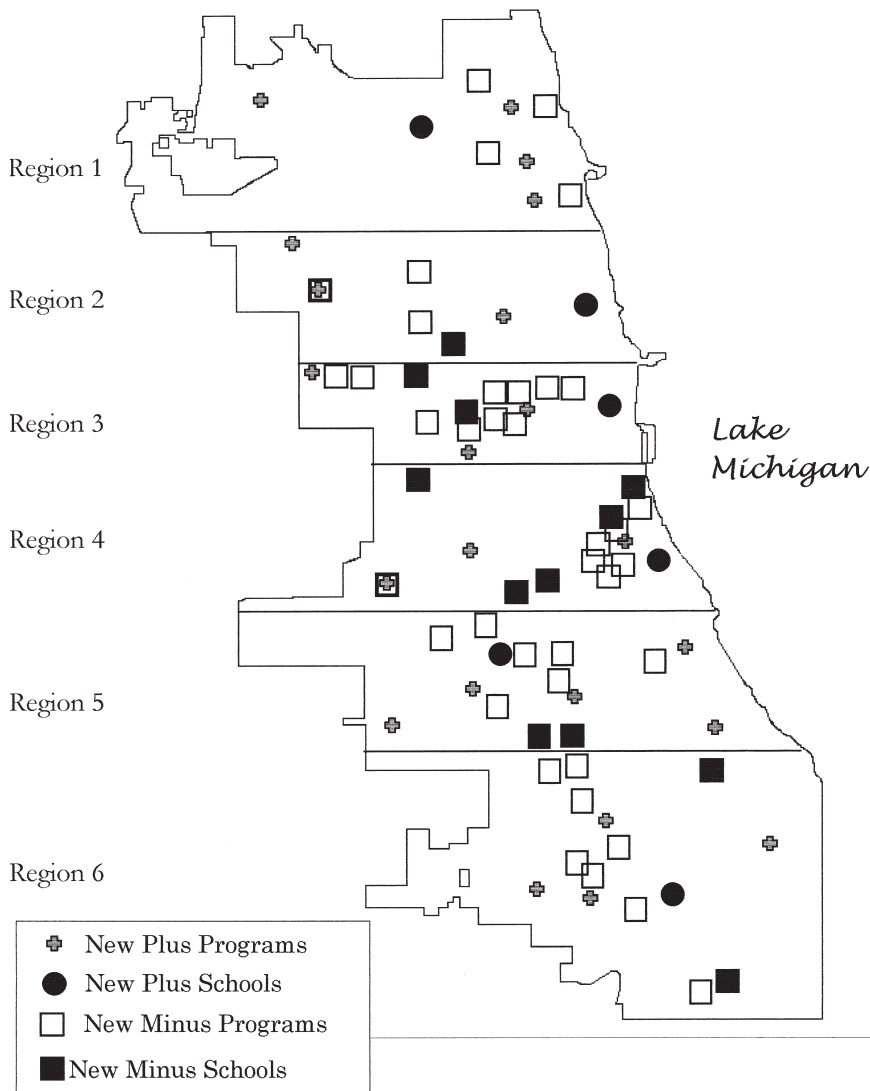


Figure 2. Map of post-1995 special programs and schools.

increase the Region 6 magnet's original renovation budget from \$1.5 million to \$33 million (Williams, 2000).

Second, IB programs, although distributed equitably, two per region, were funded in 2000 for just 30 students at each high school grade. IB students will comprise 4 to 9 percent of each school's student body except in two schools where 12.6 percent and 15.4 percent, respectively, are in the IB pro-

gram. In total, in 2000, the IBs involved 1.89 percent of all CPS high school students, and most IBs are not fully operational.

Third, there is a proliferation of minus programs and schools in Regions 3, 4, 5, and 6 in low- and very low-income African-American and Latino areas. These mainly reflect the creation of ETCs and the expansion of DI schools from 7 prior to 1995 to 45 in 2001 (personal communication, CPS Office of Accountability, October 2001). Many of the new minus programs and schools are operational and involve all students in a given school (all ETCs, military high schools, and some DI schools).²⁶ (On Figure 2, I mark DI schools as programs because schoolwide implementation varies.) Both Chicago Military Academy and Carver Military High School are in the heart of African-American low-income neighborhoods in the South Side.

In short, when we examine the distribution of new programs against CPS's claim of expanding educational opportunity, we find that although high-profile programs and schools alleged to be academically challenging are scattered throughout the city, almost all whole-school college-preparatory programs initiated in the last four years are clustered in middle-class, White, or gentrifying areas. Most academically challenging programs in low-income communities involve only a portion of the students. Vocational, military, and DI schools—most involving all students in a school—are clustered in low-income African-American or Latino areas.

I calculated that, in the 1999–2000 academic year, only 8.31 percent of all 95,235 enrolled high school students were in special college preparatory high school programs—including magnet high schools (5.86%), high school IB programs (1.89%), and MSTAs (0.56%) (CPS Web site; Allensworth & Rosenkranz, 2000). This percentage includes three college preparatory magnet high schools, one IB program existing prior to 1995, and one military academy. In 1999–2000, the number of students in all of the *new* high school college preparatory programs combined (regional magnets, IBs, and MSTAs) totaled only 4,541, or less than 5 percent of all high school students. Of course, there are special college preparatory programs in other high schools, small high schools, and charter schools and advanced academic courses available in high schools across the city, but in many general high schools these offerings are quite limited. The regional magnet high schools provide little additional access to challenging academic courses of study for the majority of students. The new high schools are so exclusive that, according to news reports, only 3 to 5 percent of students who applied and tested for admission were admitted to the three North Side regional magnets in 2001 (Rossi, 2001). At the same time, there has been an expansion of minus programs, particularly Direct Instruction. This program is tightly linked to improving test scores, as revealed by its location in the Office of Accountability, not the Office of Curriculum. In sum, programs created and expanded as part of the post-1995 policy agenda have reinforced the inequitable distribution of challenging academic programs.

Historically, magnet schools have increased class differences in urban education systems, including Chicago (Kantor & Brenzel, 1993). The new Regional College Prep Magnet High Schools are no exception—they are permitted to

bypass desegregation goals and have more than 35 percent White students in a district that is 11 percent White. Moreover, since the development of the regional magnets, the rate at which high-achieving students leave CPS has declined. If at least part of the enrollment in the new high schools is comprised of students who would otherwise have left CPS (see Allensworth & Rosenkrantz, 2000), then these schools represent even less expansion of opportunity for students who do not have the option to leave the CPS system.

Conversely, the MSTA college-preparatory math and science program seems to run counter to the dominant pattern of race and class distribution of new programs. Seven of the eight MSTAs are in high schools that are currently on probation and serve primarily low-income African Americans and Latinos. Each MSTA is eventually planned for 400 students, a much larger proportion of the total enrollment than that directed to IB programs. However, at six of the MSTAs, only 30–72 students were involved in 1999–2000, including seventh- and eighth-graders. Moreover, preparation in the feeder elementary schools is underfunded, and in public meetings and planning sessions MSTA staff noted the lack of resources for the high-quality professional development essential to building MSTAs.

From the standpoint of equity, the issue is not whether some students and parents may want vocational or military schools and some teachers may genuinely champion DI, or whether these programs are an improvement over existing schools and programs. The issue is whether *all* children, and especially those historically excluded, are prepared for and encouraged to pursue an academically challenging, thoughtful, college-bound program *and* have the support of the school system to succeed in that program if they choose it. To achieve this requires special efforts and additional resources to overcome past inequities, which have resulted in the assignment of working-class students and children of color to low-level vocational programs, basic tracks, and academically and materially inferior schools. Vocational programs and military academies are not inherently inequitable (although we might challenge the ethics of a public education that cultivates military values), but when working-class children and children of color, who have always been the targets of these programs, continue to be the target, and when these students have few alternatives, the programs clearly reproduce, if not exacerbate, inequality. Moreover, these inequalities take on new dimensions in the context of Chicago's economy.

New, highly publicized academic programs and magnet schools across the city serve a dual purpose. They are an incentive for professional and middle-class families to move to the city or remain in the city, especially to areas of budding gentrification where they provide access to a *separate* high-status-knowledge program. As one CPS official said, the IBs are to "attract more [middle-class] students to CPS. There aren't enough academic offerings for parents—they're all going to private schools. That's why this [the IBs] went out" (personal communication, February 16, 2000). Yet the Daley administration cannot ignore the city's economically and racially marginalized majority. Small, highly publicized college-preparatory programs and magnet high

schools also paint a veneer of equity on a vastly unequal system. (According to the *Catalyst* [Schaeffer, 2000, p. 13] the new regional magnets received almost half of CPS's construction and renovation funds between 1996 and 1999.) I do not claim that all of those involved have intended to develop programs that serve real estate development and that legitimate inequality; nor do I believe that all programs do this. The reality is more complex. For example, MSTAs may be a result of the commitment by some CPS administrators to extend challenging academic programs to historically disenfranchised students. Moreover, the city's racial politics compel the mayor and CPS leaders to make concessions to African-American and Latino communities. A case in point is community pressure for extensive modernization of the Region 6 Magnet High School. Yet, despite concessions, in the context of a vastly unequal school system and the drive to make Chicago a global city, the aggregate effect of new programs and schools is to support educational inequality and heightened economic and social dualities.

It is important to remember that plus programs and schools, and even ETCs and military academies, are the upper tiers of public schooling in Chicago. They are layered over neighborhood elementary schools and general high schools with very limited advanced course offerings, which represent the majority of the system. Most important, although there is a good deal of dispute about Chicago's dropout rate, a large percentage of students do not make it through the system at all. The Consortium on Chicago School Research calculates that the cohort dropout rate (following students from age 13 to 19) was 41.8 percent in 2000, down only slightly from 44.3 percent in 1997 (Allensworth & Easton, 2001). As an example, at Juarez, a general high school in a Mexican neighborhood, at the end of the first semester of ninth grade, the enrollment of the class of 2002 was 547. At the end of eleventh grade it was 303 (personal communication, Eric Gutstein, August 15, 2001). Another group of students did not even make it beyond eighth grade to enroll at Juarez. Including those students who have dropped out citywide is central to grasping the magnitude of inequality in Chicago Public Schools.

CPS Policies and the New Urban Work Force

Education reform has been a consistent priority for Chicago's corporate and financial elite. This is clear from the CCC's brief overview of Chicago's economic development proposals over the last fifteen years. In its 1984 long-term strategic plan, *Make No Little Plans: Jobs for Metropolitan Chicago*, the CCC called for making Chicago a leading financial services center, noting that although Chicago would have an abundance of workers, those workers needed constant upgrading of skills. Again, in a 1990 update (*Jobs for Metropolitan Chicago*, 1990), the CCC asserted, "The failures of Chicago's public schools in previous years have left us with hundreds of thousands of people untrained and ill equipped to fill the jobs of the new economy" (p. 4). A survey of 68 top Chicago business leaders in 1988 also pointed to the poorly educated work force as a prime reason for business loss (Mirel, 1993).

What kind of education does business want for the new work force? I do not suggest a simple correspondence between schooling and the occupational structure, but there is a striking relationship between evolving educational differentiation in CPS and the segmented labor force in the restructured economy. Although a majority of growing occupations are projected to require education or training beyond high school, there is expected to be only a modest change in educational levels for all new jobs created in 1992–2005. Castells (1996, p. 224) projects that the proportion of college graduate workers will increase by 1.4 percent and the proportion of high school graduate workers will decrease by 1 percent. The Bureau of Labor Statistics predicted that between 1992 and 2005 there would be 6.2 million new professional workers and 6.5 million new low-wage service workers (Castells, 1996, p. 225; see also Apple, 1996).

While much has been made of the need to upgrade skills (National Center on Education and the Economy, 1990), many new jobs do not require sophisticated new knowledge but, rather, basic literacies, ability to follow directions, and accommodating dispositions toward work. In 1998, the CCC defined the “ever-more-skilled employees” required by the new economy as people “who can, at the minimum, read instruction manuals, do basic math and communicate well” (Johnson, 1998, p. 6). This definition is corroborated by Rosenbaum and Binder’s (1997) interviews with 51 urban and suburban Chicago employers, the majority of whom said they needed employees with “eighth-grade math skills and better than eighth-grade reading and writing skills.” The 1990 Commercial Club report also notes that “minorities” in low-performing schools will become a greater part of the work force and will need these new basic competencies.

Despite publicity about specialized schools, the overwhelming majority of Chicago high school students, most of whom are students of color, are enrolled in neighborhood high schools organized around these basic competencies. In the era of Fordist industrial production, workers needed very specific skills (such as welding). However, because of rapid technological advances, specific tasks are increasingly accomplished through informational technology (computers, robotics), and jobs are constantly being redefined. The new low-wage service and post-Fordist manufacturing jobs, as well as the large number of jobs filled by part-time and temporary labor, require the flexibility to adapt to changing job requirements, and basic literacies in reading and math are essential to this learning. As Carlson (1996) argues, “The ‘basic skills’ restructuring of urban schools around standardized testing and a skill-based curriculum has been a response to the changing character of work in post-industrial America, and it has participated in the construction of a new post-industrial working class . . . of clerical, data processing, janitorial, and service industry jobs” (pp. 282–283).

Differentiated high schools are related to other strata of the labor force. For example, coordinated with local business partners and vocational programs at community colleges, ETCs are explicitly linked to specific entry-level, skilled, and semiskilled manufacturing and service work, such as automotive

technology, hospitality management, mechanical design, cosmetology, and secretarial science. Some ETCs prepare for entry-level jobs, for example, hospitality. Others, such as health services, require further training or education. The goal of ETCs is to prepare students with “a solid background of vocational training in their field” (personal communication, CPS official, April 12, 2000) or enable them to continue a vocational program in a postsecondary school. Unfortunately, in the new economy of simultaneously higher-skilled and downgraded labor, many of these jobs do not offer the benefits, security, or relatively stable incomes of the unionized industrial jobs of the past. For example, whereas some clerical work requires greater information processing skills, it is often part-time and temporary. The same is true for robotized and high-tech manufacture, which requires many fewer workers than in the industrial era but workers with the education to program computers, trouble-shoot, and solve problems in digitalized production processes. Other ETC vocational courses, such as hospitality management, have a nonacademic curriculum core, and entry-level jobs are likely to be low-wage. At the same time, college preparatory magnets, IBs, and perhaps MSTAs will prepare a top tier of students for four-year colleges and universities and orient them toward technical and professional knowledge work. At the opposite end, the more than 40 percent of students who do not graduate may have little opportunity to participate in the formal economy. The regimentation of scripted instruction and test preparation, as well as retention and assignment to transition high schools, may serve to weed out youth deemed superfluous to the labor force.

Tracking, differentiated curricula, and magnet schools are nothing new (Oakes, 1985). However, educational differentiation takes on new meaning in a society in which knowledge is far more decisive than in the past, when a high school diploma was sufficient to gain entry to a well-paid, stable job and sense of future. In the informational economy, education is a key determinant of whether one will be a high-paid knowledge worker or part of the downgraded labor sector. The differentiation of schools and academic programs results in differential access to specific courses of study that have significant implications for students’ preparation for college: for example, the high school math and science classes taken by students at the college preparatory magnets as compared with those offered in general high schools. Ramon Flecha (1999) notes: “As a consequence of the dual model of society, education . . . is becoming an increasingly important criterion for determining who joins which group. The educational curriculum, therefore, has become a factor in the process of social dualization, the selection of the fittest” (p. 66).

Producing Differentiated Identities

Equally important, differentiated schools and programs provide students with different resources from which to construct their identities. This has serious implications in a segmented labor market and a dualized society. Students

assimilate identities by apprenticing to a particular discourse. In this sense, a *discourse* “is composed of talking, listening, reading, writing, interacting, believing, valuing . . . so as to display or to recognize a particular social identity” (Gee et al., 1996, p. 10). Discourses produce certain kinds of people:

Immersion inside the practices—learning *inside* the procedures, rather than overtly *about* [emphases in original] them—ensures that a learner takes on the perspectives, adopts a world view, accepts a set of core values, and masters an identity without a great deal of critical and reflective awareness about these matters, or indeed about the Discourse itself. (p. 13)

Thus scripted direct instruction programs, IBs, ETCs, military academies, college preparatory magnet high schools, and so on, constitute social practices that apprentice students to particular identities with profound implications in a layered society of a “relatively well-paid core of knowledge leaders and workers and a bevy of people servicing them for the least possible price” (Gee et al., 1996, p. 47). I want to emphasize that this social reproduction is not necessarily purposeful. Teachers and administrators I have talked with who champion DI, military schools, and ETCs are generally dedicated to improving the academic performance and futures of their students. It is the material and ideological effect of this differentiated learning that is the point here.

Differentiated schools and programs also construct public meanings about the students who attend them. The prestigious IB program, with its stringent admission requirements and diploma “recognized worldwide,” has a cachet quite different from the Military Academy’s concentration on military discipline. The audiences for these programs include students and parents who select specific programs, the general public, and employers. In addition to basic mathematical and print literacy, employers are particularly concerned with future workers’ attitudes and “work ethic” (Ray & Mickelson, 1993), their reliability, trustworthiness, ability to take directions, and in the case of in-person service workers, a pleasant manner (Gee et al., 1996). Eighty percent of the business leaders sampled by the Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce said that they were seeking a stronger work ethic, appropriate social behavior, and a good attitude from their new workers (Ray & Mickelson, 1993). Moberg (1997) notes that Chicago is at a disadvantage in attracting new firms because there is a widespread perception that Chicago’s work force is “ill-educated, untrained, and difficult to manage”; this perception “especially affects the hiring of black men” (p. 79). It is interesting that the description of the new ETCs, including “job-readiness” and “employability skills,” addresses this “problem,” as does CPS’s focus on discipline and individual responsibility.

Public perception and the actual socialization of youth and of a disciplined work force are constructed through a set of policies and a rhetoric that emphasize hard work and personal responsibility, individual achievement, and regulation and control (see Lipman, 2002). This is the pedagogy

of scripted instruction and basic skills, through which students are trained to follow directions and learn according to a strict protocol. And the ideology of individual responsibility is reinforced by the system of high-stakes tests that places failure on the shoulders of individual students and that drives home the message that they pass or fail through their own efforts.

There is a potent racial subtext here as well. The ideological force of racially coded “basic skills,” scripted instruction, and social control in the classroom is to discursively construct African-American and Latino youth as in need of regulation and control. The epitome of this is the establishment by CPS of the first two public military high schools in the United States—both in African-American communities. The military academies are run in partnership with the U.S. Army. The principal of the Chicago Military Academy is a retired Army Brigadier General; teachers wear military uniforms and are referred to as “Captain.” In addition to the CPS disciplinary code, the schools follow the military code of discipline; for every misstep (e.g., failure to turn in homework, tardiness), there is a penalty (e.g., doing push-ups, cleaning walls). The schools are known for strict discipline and military drill—by implication bringing in line dangerous and unruly African-American and Latino youth. As Gery Chico said when the first academy opened, “It’s a school based on rules and conduct. This is a very good thing” (Quintanilla, 1999, p. 16).

This is quite different from the open and relaxed environment of majority-White Northside Prep, where students lounge in spacious hallways and participate in Wednesday afternoon colloquia. But in the absence of good high schools, resources to attend college, or prospects for good jobs, and given the threat of gangs in high schools, military academies, like military service itself, are a viable choice in a world of few options. Furthermore, the academies promise “leadership development” (within a hierarchical system of command) in a public school system that largely disregards the leadership potential of many youth. Thus parental support for military academies, as for ETCs, may in part reflect the restricted opportunities available to low-income students of color. Nonetheless, programs and policies that focus on discipline, regulation, and control teach students their “place” in a race and class hierarchy (cf. Bartlett & Lutz, 1998), bringing into line those who comply and pushing those who do not outside the bounds of formal work and legitimated social intercourse.

Of course, students are not simply shaped by schools and by the forces of the new urban economy. They form their identities through experiences in a variety of spaces—families, community centers, peer groups, churches, and so forth. Still, Chicago’s differentiated educational experiences provide different resources for students to draw upon to construct their identities.

School Policy, Gentrification, and the Cultural Politics of Race

To attract producer and financial services, global cities must satisfy the lifestyle demands of high-paid, high-skilled workers (Sassen, 1994). “Challenging,” “state of the art” schools are a key component. New York, for example, has

an established upper tier of elite public schools as well as private schools. A series of articles in the *Chicago Tribune* on Chicago's bid to become a global city notes that key business spokespeople consistently identify the need to "fix" the schools, "both to provide a pool of good workers and to persuade middle-class and upper-class families to settle in the city" (Longworth & Burns, 1999, p. A14). CPS leaders have been quite explicit about this strategy. Gery Chico, in a CPS press release announcing three new magnet high schools, said, "Students who are ready for a challenging academic program will be able to find it at a school in their area" (Three More Schools, 1999). And a 1998 *Chicago Tribune* article on the "hottest" real estate markets in the city noted that "Chicago's improving public school system is making young families less leery of rearing their children in the city" (Pitt, 1998, August 31). This argument is presented in public partly because CPS is openly appealing to middle-class families and partly because it is taken for granted that middle-class children are essential to a good school system. Like the argument for mixed-income housing, the assumption is that there cannot be good working-class schools (or good working-class neighborhoods).

"Good" schools are real estate anchors in gentrifying neighborhoods. The intersection of CPS policies and the interests of developers and real estate companies is apparent in the geographical location of four of the new college-preparatory magnet high schools. The future of the new Region 3 magnet, opened in fall 1998, replacing Jones Commercial High School, is with the massive new upscale South Loop development where it is located. This was clear to the Jones parents, students, and the local school council, who protested the school's conversion from a business high school. Jones was widely supported by working-class families, whose children were, for the most part, destined to be excluded from the new school. "It's real obvious that it's tied to the gentrification of the neighborhood," one teacher said. "They want a school that they can point to and say, 'Here's a school for your kids'" (Phuong Le & Malone, 1998, p. 2). The displacement of the previous students was itself a process of gentrification, removing the working-class high school students who fought to keep it open much as working-class families have fought developers in the neighborhood.

Another case is a new Region 1 magnet, Northside College Prep (opened in fall 1999), which draws from 6 of the 15 "hottest" neighborhoods (those with the greatest increases in real estate values) (Pitt, August 31, 1998) and 3 more areas that realtors predict will be "future hot spots" in the next ten years (Pitt, September 1, 1998). Payton, the Region 2 magnet, is in the upper-income Gold Coast area, with median house prices at \$271,000 (Williams, 2000), just north of the gentrifying North Loop and east of the redeveloped Cabrini Green public housing project, now the site of \$1.3 million townhouses. Payton also draws from upscale Lincoln Park, as well as from newly gentrifying neighborhoods to the northwest. King, the Region 4 magnet, is in the Kenwood neighborhood, where "distinguished new residences" are advertised just blocks from boarded-up housing projects. King is also near Hyde Park, home of the University of Chicago. From 1995 to 1998, median

prices for detached, single-family houses went up 50 percent in Kenwood and 67 percent in Hyde Park (Pitt, August 31, 1998, p. 9).

As a whole, the CPS policy agenda and the discourses that surround it are part of a larger cultural politics of race that both serves development interests and has a life of its own rooted in Chicago's racialized history. Magnet high schools, IB programs, and publicity about rising test scores are complemented by policies that emphasize regulation and centralized control, primarily of students of color. Policies that symbolically discipline African-American and Latino youth signify "taking back" the city as a space of middle-class social stability and Whiteness from African Americans and Latinos, whose neighborhoods, "place-making practices," and identities are a threat to "stability" (Haymes, 1995). Like the vocabulary of the "urban frontier," which rationalizes gentrification and displacement as the taming of urban neighborhoods (Smith, 1996), racially coded "basic skills," scripted instruction, probation and reconstitution of schools, and military schools for African Americans and Latinos legitimate both the segregation and the dispersal of low-income communities of color in need of discipline and control. These policies (the "flip side" of those applied to elite high schools) help make the city "safe" for new upscale enclaves, much as "the new urban pioneers seek to scrub the city clean of its working-class geography and history, . . . its class and race contours rubbed smooth" (Smith, 1996, pp. 26–27). The discourse of control and authority can also be interpreted as a preemptive response on the part of city officials to an urban context simmering with potentially explosive contradictions of wealth and poverty, development and abandonment, and blatant economic and social power alongside disempowerment.

Conclusion

Chicago is demonstrating that education is another front in the struggle for the direction of globalization. The stakes are high. As Gee, Hull, and Lankshear (1996, p. 44) aptly warn, "We are heading towards a world in which a small number of countries and a small number of people within them will benefit substantively from the new capitalism, while a large number of others will be progressively worse off and exploited." My analysis suggests that Chicago's school reforms support this social dualization. The policies concretely and symbolically produce a highly segmented and polarized labor force. They support the spatial reorganization of the city along lines of race, ethnicity, and class; and they instantiate a racialized discourse of regulation and control. Yet this outcome is not inevitable, despite the reigning logic of capitalist accumulation in the age of globalization. Nor does economic restructuring inherently dictate policies that intensify inequality. Economic restructuring is itself shaped by the specific alignment of social forces in cities and their relative power. In short, there is space for human agency to reshape economic and social relations and social policy, in cities and globally (see Preteceille, 1990).

Current CPS policies represent a convergence of interests of financial elites and the city's political regime, but they are supported and accomplished

by well-meaning educators at all levels of the school system, as well as many Chicagoans, operating out of a shared common sense that the policies will improve schools. This common sense is constructed out of real hopes and frustrations. It is bolstered by CPS's rhetoric of equity and resoluteness and the pragmatic logic of a quick fix through the blunt force of sanctions and punishment. Unequal educational experiences are rendered less visible by establishing standards and tests that promise equal treatment and rigor. Although new advanced academic programs involve a very small percentage of students, their well-advertised initiation serves to legitimate the current policy regime even as it helps to develop the city as a concentrated expression of new global inequalities.

In the end, this agenda has prevailed because the city's political regime, including top school administrators, have shaped the public conversation about education. By framing current policies in the language of equity and labeling any criticism an endorsement of "the failed policies of the past," they have effectively muffled opposition. In the absence of a cogent counter-discourse, the policies have imposed a definition of education, specified processes of human and institutional change, and limited the terms of the discussion. Powerfully disseminated through the media, these policies are part of a dominant system of social relations (Ozga, 2000). As Preteceille (1990) explains,

Policy discourse becomes part of a *discourse policy* [emphasis added], turned through the media, toward society as a whole, whether at the national or local level, as part of the work of hegemony. . . . Politicians and state institutions, central and local, state their capacity to recognize social problems, impose their legitimate definition and solutions, which will in turn contribute to structuring the way people, as well as other economic and political actors, think of those problems and define their actions. (p. 45)

Nevertheless, several Chicago school reform organizations, as well as activist parent, student, and teacher organizations, have proposed alternative policies. For example, an established citywide parents' group, in collaboration with other school reformers, has developed a proposal for multiple assessments of student progress, elimination of retention based on test scores, and community participation in school reform. This plan and others are constructive contributions to a public discussion about educational change. However, I would argue that they are limited, not only by their influence but by their frameworks.

What is missing is a program that clearly challenges the injustice of CPS policies—past and present—and offers an alternative that goes beyond high-stakes testing to address the transformation of teaching and learning and the democratic mission of public education. All too often, criticism of high-stakes testing and accountability fails to address comprehensively the persistent failure of schools to educate African-American, Latino, Native American, and many Asian children. And much reform talk takes for granted the limits of

current budgets and government priorities. Changing this public conversation is one important step toward more just and liberatory policies. There is a need for policy language, as well as concrete proposals, that link the urgency to improve urban schools with goals of rich literacy, cultural and social relevance, and critical approaches to knowledge. Such an alternative can only grow out of a rich public dialogue between educators and students, families, and communities about what is in the best interest of children. In particular, the dialogue must be informed by those who have been most failed by the public schools, especially students, communities, and committed educators of color (Delpit, 1988).

In the spirit of dialogue, I suggest four premises of an alternative agenda. First, all students need an education that is intellectually rich and rigorous *and* that instills a sense of personal, cultural, and social agency—an education that helps them to think critically and ethically about the inequalities enveloping our lives while it prepares them for a wide range of academic and vocational choices. Although the realization of such an education is obviously complex, documented successes in urban schools attest to its possibility (e.g., Ladson-Billings, 1994; *Rethinking Schools*, 1994, 2001). Second, a commitment to educate all students requires the deployment of significant material and intellectual resources. As in most urban public school systems, there is a crying need in Chicago to substantially reduce class size;²⁷ to provide consistent high-quality professional development and time for teachers to plan and reflect in order to transform the nature of teaching, learning, and assessment; to recruit and retain expert, committed teachers in schools in the poorest communities; to provide up-to-date science labs, current and well-stocked school libraries, arts and foreign language programs, state-of-the-art and well-run computer labs, and so forth. Third, reversing the historical inequities and current failures of urban schools requires reciprocal responsibility by educators, students, parents, school leaders, and policymakers. In particular, political officials and school leaders should be held accountable to advocate for and ensure necessary resources and to overcome present and past discrimination. Fourth, transforming urban schools entails a protracted campaign to challenge deficit notions about children of color and their families and to question the appropriateness of impoverished curricula for these students (Lipman, 1998).

To some, a broad and nuanced educational vision is unrealistic. However, like the city's development agenda, educational policy embodies political and economic interests. The pragmatic common sense of CPS "reforms" meshes with social and economic policies that generate despair, dislocation, and marginalization alongside unparalleled wealth and opportunity. If Chicago and other urban systems are to create a purposeful education for all students, then they will need to turn away from policies rooted in economic and social priorities that produce inequality. An equitable education is not limited to high test scores or basic skills or even college preparation. It provides the intellectual and ethical tools that students need to survive and critique the segmented identities and unequal futures being created in the schools, in the city,

and globally. Pursuit of this educational direction is part of a larger democratic project to reshape urban policy in this era of globalization.

Notes

¹Culturally relevant teaching uses children's culture to promote academic success, cultural competence, and sociopolitical consciousness (Ladson-Billings, 1994).

²The 1995 reform also greatly increased centralized control of personnel and fiscal decisions, removed barriers to out-sourcing of school services (e.g., custodial services) to private companies, and prohibited teacher strikes for 18 months.

³The 1988 reform, a product of a coalition of school reformers, business interests, and grassroots activists (Hess, 1991), was based on the theory that decentralization and grassroots participation would stimulate innovation (Bryk, Sebring, Kerbow, Rollow, & Easton, 1998; Katz, 1992).

⁴Shipp, Kahne, and Smiley (1999) argue that both reforms were promoted by the city's business interests to stabilize and legitimize a failing, mismanaged school system; promote economic growth; and improve school performance and achievement. They argue that business interests pushed the 1995 law to intensify the pace of reform.

⁵The LSCs have lost power in budgeting, opportunities for training, control of Chapter 1 funds, and the selection of principals. The CEO of CPS has gained greater control over LSCs (Lewis, 1997; Williams, 2000).

⁶Among the schools that I studied, one LSC was unable to recruit enough parents to fill the parent seats and was essentially not functioning; another LSC rubber-stamped the principal's recommendations. In both, LSC decisions regarding curriculum and budget were geared to raising test scores and getting off probation or avoiding it. A third school had an active LSC that challenged board policies. The LSC of a fourth school was a model of engaged civic participation, with task forces, subcommittees, study groups, and its own reports and recommendations. Yet this LSC's activism was also constrained by fears of drawing too much attention and bringing the school under tighter scrutiny of district officials.

⁷I worked with several research assistants at these schools and others in the study.

⁸We conducted a total of 13 teacher interviews in 1997–1998, 20 in 1998–1999, 8 in 1999–2000, and 14 in 2000–2001. Some were repeat interviews of the same teachers, others were of new teachers. Over a period of four years we interviewed a total of 19 Grover teachers and 14 Westlawn teachers.

⁹I made these observations in conjunction with a larger study that used a structured protocol. My own complementary notes used more ethnographic methods.

¹⁰Variation in research plans and in degree of teacher collaboration reflects the varied conditions under which I conducted research in each of the schools. The Grover and Westlawn studies were partly shaped by my participation in a large research project. The variations also reflect specific issues posed by the schools; for example, issues of culture and language were very prominent at Brewer and shaped that study.

¹¹Ray and Mickelson (1993, p. 9) estimate that 28 percent to 35 percent of all workers in the United States can be classified as contingent.

¹²Castells (1996) projects the following model of the occupational structure in 2005: an increase in the upper-class (managers and professionals) share of employment from 23.7 percent in 1992 to 25.3 percent; a decline in the middle-class occupations (technicians and craft workers) from 14.7 percent to 14.3 percent; a decline in the lower-middle-class occupations (sales, clerical, operators) from 42.7 percent to 40.0 percent; and an increase in the lower-class occupations (service and agricultural workers) from 18.9 percent to 20 percent (p. 225).

¹³Key factors are the drive by business to weaken unions in the 1980s and 1990s, increased subcontracting and offshore production, more contingent labor, and the rapidly growing informal economy that pays substandard wages with subminimum health and safety standards.

¹⁴Sanjek (1998, pp. 141–145) argues that in New York, global city discourse, rather than the reality of economic concentration, was used by financial and city-planning elites to promote development policies that favored the financial center and ignored neighborhoods.

¹⁵See Wacquant and Wilson (1989) for an analysis of African-American joblessness and economic exclusion in Chicago due to processes of spatial and economic restructuring.

¹⁶According to Morenoff and Tienda (1997), in 1970, “transitional working class neighborhoods” were the most dominant neighborhood type in Chicago, with 45 percent of census tracts; but by 1990 such neighborhoods comprised only 14 percent of all neighborhoods. The “yuppie” category doubled in the decade of the 1980s; “ghetto underclass” neighborhoods also increased, from 3 percent of census tracts to 23 percent during the 1970s. These data do not reflect the displacement of low-income communities in the 1990s.

¹⁷According to Newmann, Bryk, and Nagaoka (2001), authentic intellectual work is characterized by assignments that demand high-order thinking, comprehensive understanding, elaborated communication, and connections with students’ lives beyond school and that require students to apply, integrate, interpret, and analyze knowledge. Basic skills instruction is characterized by memorization, drills, exercises, and tests that ask students to reproduce knowledge in the same form in which it was learned.

¹⁸Anecdotally, this unofficial policy has been widely confirmed by CPS teachers in my graduate education classes.

¹⁹Eighth-grade students who fail the ITBS in the spring automatically lose their placements in competitive magnet high schools even if they retake and pass the test in summer school.

²⁰The CPS Office of Accountability lists 45 direct instruction schools. This list has varied slightly from 2000 to 20001. Implementation also varies among schools (from telephone and written communications and interviews with CPS officials in April 2000, January 2001, and September 2001).

²¹Uncategorized programs or schools include Elementary Magnet Clusters, Middle Years Prospective IB programs, Education to Career Clusters, International Language and Career Academies—all post-1995.

²²Figure 2 shows two schools that are plus and minus; both have an ETC and an IB program.

²³As of this writing, community-area income data based on the 2000 census are not yet available. Data on racial distribution by neighborhood are available from the North-eastern Illinois Planning Commission at <http://www.nipc.cog.il.us/>. Housing prices and rental costs by neighborhood are available from the City of Chicago, Department of Planning and Development, at <http://www.ci.chi.il.us/PlanAndDevelop/ChgoFacts>.

²⁴I use Allensworth and Rosenkranz’s (2000) data and income classifications. They define median family income distribution as follows: \$0–16,000 = very low income; \$16,000–29,000 = low income; \$29,000–55,000 = middle income; \$55,000–151,000 = upper income. See pp. 26–27 for maps of median family income and race by region.

²⁵The opening of the Region 4 magnet in 2001 was postponed.

²⁶The exact number of DI schools that employ DI schoolwide is not available, but schoolwide programs are the central office goal (personal communication, CPS administrator, September 2001).

²⁷Virtually all of the teachers who talked with me named reduced class size as a top priority to improve teaching and learning. See also research on effects of class size on learning (e.g., Nye, Hedges, & Konstantopoulos, 2000).

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